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Statements and recommendations by major groups and stakeholders for consideration by the United Nations Environment Assembly at its third session

Note by the Executive Director

Summary

The annex to the present note sets out statements, key messages and recommendations by major groups and stakeholders prepared during regional consultations held in preparation for the third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly. The statements, key messages and recommendations are reproduced as received, without formal editing.

Discussions at the regional consultations were structured according to regional priorities around the various themes of pollution but also addressed issues of sustainable development and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, regional trends, development justice, environmental human rights defenders, illegal trade in hazardous waste and wildlife, areas affected by conflict, climate change, citizen engagement, the role of cities and the need to increase civil society support and representation.

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The United Nations Environment Programme regional consultation meeting with major groups and stakeholders of Latin America and the Caribbean

Puntarenas, Costa Rica, 7-8 June 2017

Regional Declaration from Latin America and the Caribbean for the UNEA 3

Pollution

Regarding the theme of UNEA 3, Towards a pollution free planet, the inputs included in this declaration were made by the contributions from collaborators at the Regional Consultation Meeting held in Puntarenas, Costa Rica during the month of June 2017; and the Regional Consultation on Pollution, launched by LACEMOS from October 2017 to November 2017 with more than 100 collaborators from 17 countries from the region.

We make an urgent call to States and Governments, the United Nations System and multilateral official and public institutions, to raise the level of commitment and the ethical and political will to adopt actions and decisions that put a halt to global pollution. Pollution, together with the impacts of resource extraction, the development of megaprojects and the effects of climate change, are causing irreversible damage to freshwater and oceans, as well as the accelerated loss of biodiversity, the livelihoods of communities, the deterioration of ecosystems, as well as deepening the conditions of inequality, impoverishment and vulnerability in which people live, especially in the South of the Globe.

We note that the consultation held within the dynamics of the Earth system, based on the GEO methodology, water and oceans are the most affected from the perspective of regional citizenship, followed by the loss of biodiversity. We consider water, oceans, and biodiversity valuable natural common goods and heritage of the region, which unfortunately are being destroyed by pollution caused by various activities such as industry, extractive activity, and general unconscious human activity. Pollution does not recognize borders and affects the entire region; this is why we request decisions and actions in favor of ecological integrity and the community of life.

We insist on the need for the creation of a legal framework that regulates pollution, and that encompasses any activity that could generate negative environmental impacts, such as extractive activity, monocultures and the use of agrotoxins for agriculture. It is also necessary that the existing legal framework in countries of the region, should establish the obligatory and systematic local consultation prior to the implementation of the extractive activity, or any activity that could generate a negative environmental impact, respecting the principle of the self-determination of the people's. We emphasize the importance of preparing environmental impact studies to which the citizens of the affected areas should have access, thus guaranteeing Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration. Additionally, the legal framework must promote incentives for good practices, promoting Sustainable Development as well as sanctions for legal or natural persons that pollute or deteriorate nature.

We consider the implementation of fiscal measures and the application of sanctions to those who pollute the environment and damage nature, as an efficient mechanism to reduce pollution levels. Concrete actions for environmental protection are necessary, through legal mechanisms that guarantee the Environmental Rule of Law, with follow-up processes against legal or natural persons that cause damage to nature, and respect for the polluter-pay principle, coercing those who pollute to the restitution of the damage.

We insist on the transformative capacity of formal and informal environmental education at all levels, beginning at an early age, to inform and educate citizens about the care of the global common goods. We propose the promulgation and stimulation of environmental education based on the conservation of natural resources, which intentionally assumes the principles of precaution and prevention, as well as common but differentiated capacities. In addition, we support promoting usage of the waste generated by each individual on the planet, promoting techniques of development friendly with nature, taking ancestral knowledge as the basis of local production practices, and supporting the development of sustainable technologies, through investment in research and science.

The impunity in the cases of environmentalists murdered in the region is alarming, in fact, the figures of environmentalists killed increases every year. Cases like the case of Berta Cáceres worry us. These acts mean that in Latin America and the Caribbean, being an environmentalist or defending the

Pachamama can cost you your life. We ask for justice for the victims and their families, and we urge States to create policies for prevention and protection for those who exercise the activity of caring and defending the environment.

We request that access to environmental information be full and transparent, in compliance with Principle 10 and the resolution of the Rio + 20 Summit "The Future We Want" along with all its principles, and we regret that these have not been adopted as a whole in many signatory countries.

We emphasize that access to information and participation, the role of the law, and non-regression in environmental law issues, all are central issues for the advancement of justice and democracy in environmental matters in the region. Therefore we request for compliance of laws and international agreements on environmental matters.

Regional participation and the need for revision of the policy of involvement of the major groups and stakeholders in UN Environment

We make an urgent call for the revision of the stakeholder engagement policy. We are concerned about how UNEP has been handling the issue, such as the arbitrary alteration of the name of the unit related with us of Major Groups and Stakeholders Unit, to Civil Society Unit.

Since the presentation of the report of the Regional Participation Consultation 2015-2017, promoted by the regional representatives of the Major Groups of the United Nations Environment Program for Latin America and the Caribbean, we have highlighted our reality of participation, which we find to be not representative and very limited. We thus present a more profound exposition related to the subject:

The asymmetric difference in participation and involvement between the sub regions of Latin America and the Caribbean is remarkable. Likewise, the difficulty of promoting dialogue and cooperation between Spanish speakers and those who speak English (Caribbean) and Portuguese (Brazil), is a reality that needs dedication and mutual commitment on all sides to achieve common goals.

In addition, we observed that the degree of response and effective participation of accredited organizations is very limited and low; out of 16 organizations accredited in the region at the time of consultation, only 6 are active in the processes.

It is necessary that UNEP updates the consultative status of accredited organizations, and to find ways to keep participation more accessible to organizations and citizens. In the region we are proud to be managing citizen processes, which are open and inclusive.

We are concerned that of the 16 accredited organizations, only 5 of the 9 Major Groups are minimally represented, which means that there are groups without any representation in the region. The Major Groups to follow, until June 2017, never had any formal participation or representation in the regional participation mechanisms of the United Nations Environment Program: Children and Youth, Trade and Industry, Workers and its Unions, and Local Authorities.

We need participation processes guided by the principles of effective participation, ethics, cooperation, and dialogue between the agents of the Major Groups and other agents, with special importance to UNEP and Governments. This is to raise and amplify the voices that have been historically and systematically excluded from global public decisions, honoring the principle "that no one be left behind" of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and making visible the capacities of proposals and solutions of social movements, the territorial networks, and the civil society before the challenges that lay ahead for the care of the environment and of nature.

About LACEMOS

We are committed to the promotion of our organization to revitalize the current participation in an intentional, informed, educated, and effective way. We, regional citizens and agents of the Major Groups, created LACEMOS: the Latin America and the Caribbean Engagement Mechanism. This mechanism will serve as a platform for accessing information, and will promote consultations and synergies to create shared paths among the various agents operating in the region, in cooperation with Mother Earth.

We recognize the leadership in self-organization, and inspiration from the RCEM Asia Pacific Engagement Mechanism and the Women's Major Group who are creating a healthy path for effective participation.

We affirm that UNEA 3 represents an opportunity to lay meaningful foundations, promote cooperation, and develop initiatives and platforms that effectively engages all Stakeholders towards working for a healthy planet and humanity in a sustainable world that promotes lasting peace. We understand that it is a human right to guarantee the care, defense and continuity of life and nature in for the global common good with a focus on justice and intergenerational equity.

UN Environment regional consultation with major groups and stakeholders of Africa

Libreville, Gabon, 10-11 June 2017

Statement and key messages by the African major groups and stakeholders to the sixteenth session of the African ministerial conference on the environment (AMCEN)

We, the representatives of the African Civil Society as Major Groups and Stakeholders, having met in Libreville, Gabon on 10-11th June 2017 for the Regional Consultation Meeting to prepare for the 16th session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) and the 3rd session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA);

Take note of the resolutions and decisions made in the year 2016 during the 6th Special Session of the AMCEN, UNEA-2, and UNFCCC COP22;

Appreciate continued facilitation for engagement of major groups by UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and AMCEN;

Further appreciate the support by Pan-African Climate Justice Alliance (PACJA), Konrad Adeneur Stiftung (KAS), the Government of Morocco & our host - the Government of Gabon;

Recognize the role of indigenous knowledge and efforts in conserving the environment and addressing climate change challenges in Africa;

Alarmed by the failure of most member states to make payment of the mandatory annual contribution to the AMCEN trust fund;

Aware that the third session of UN Environment Assembly will take place in December 2017 in Nairobi, Kenya under the theme *'Towards a Pollution-free planet'*;

Concerned with the high levels of environmental degradation in Africa as a result of multiple sources including air, soil, marine and fresh water pollution;

Further concerned that weak implementation of decisions adopted at AMCEN by member states has resulted in increased challenges facing the African continent such as food insecurity, illegal wildlife trade and unsustainable exploitation of natural resources;

Applaud the political commitment of the committee of African Heads of States for the African Renewable Energy Initiative (AREI);

Condemn the decision by the United States to withdraw from the Paris Agreement;

We therefore call for action from the member states in Africa as follows:

1. **On AMCEN:**

We call upon member states through the African Heads of State to revisit the proposal to dissolve AMCEN. We also call on AMCEN to improve the provision of policy guidance and heightened responses to regional environmental and sustainable development challenges.

We strongly urge Member States to live up to their obligation and pay the mandatory annual contribution to the Trust Fund. The contributions will ensure sustainable financing for convening AMCEN and implementation of its activities. We commend all member states who have met their obligation and single out Madagascar, Mauritius and South Africa for contributing beyond the mandatory amount. We also call upon AMCEN and African member states to financially support the engagement of the African Civil Society to effectively participate in environmental governance processes in Africa.

2. **On implementation of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and Africa Agenda 2063:**

We call upon African Governments to accelerate the implementation of SDGs and Africa Agenda 2063, by taking an integrated, inclusive, innovative and gender-responsive approach to ensure collective actions.

We further call on the African Governments to cap foreign debt and domestically mobilize and effectively utilize both financial and natural resources to reflect African priorities.

3. **On climate change and acceleration of Implementation of the Paris Agreement:**

We call upon African Governments to adopt a declaration to affirm their commitment and strongly condemn the decision by the United States to withdraw from the Paris Agreement. African Governments that have not yet ratified the Agreement should do so and prepare comprehensive low-carbon and climate-resilient strategies.

We further call upon the African Governments to support the Africa Group of Negotiators in the development of an "Africa Paris Rulebook" before the 23rd session of the UNFCCC Conference of Parties (COP23).

We strongly urge our African leaders to develop, pursue and implement their climate and sustainable development commitments.

4. **Renewable Energy:**

We call upon the African Governments to develop robust plans and resource mobilization strategies to invest and harness the great renewable energy potential in the continent in order provide access to millions of energy poor populations across the continent.

We further call upon African leaders to safeguard the Africa Renewable Energy Initiative (AREI) and put in place necessary procedures to ensure this remains Africa-driven and deliver the energy transformation the continent is aspiring for.

5. **Pollution:**

We strongly urge African Governments to take decisive action to combat all forms of pollution including ban on production, importation and use of plastics. African Governments should adopt best practices from a country like Rwanda on plastics ban.

Further, we urge African Government to increase investment on research, advance clean technologies and implement existing laws to deal with all types of pollution and at all levels.

We encourage governments to address pollution related to mining, agriculture, waste, including trans boundary pollution, by monitoring compliance with regulatory frameworks.

6. **Illegal Wildlife Trade**

We call upon member states to accelerate the implementation of the African Strategy on Combatting Illegal Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora. We further request governments to implement the Convention on Migratory Species to prevent the risk of poisoning of wildlife, develop and enforce legislation to regulate and restrict the use and disposal of toxic chemicals used to poison wildlife.

7. **Gender, youth and indigenous peoples:**

We call upon African Governments to embark on gender-responsive and participatory approaches where both women, men and youth are equally involved and well represented at all levels. Governments should harness the vast potential of indigenous knowledge of the African people to provide sustainable solutions to environmental challenges.

We strongly reiterate our commitment, in collaborating and supporting efforts by our governments and other stakeholders, to promote initiatives geared towards investing in innovative environmental solutions to accelerate implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 in Africa.

UN Environment regional consultation with major groups and stakeholders of Asia and the Pacific

Bangkok 4th September 2017

Development Justice as key enabler to achieve a resource efficient and Pollution Free Asia Pacific and The World CSO Forum Statement for Asia Pacific Ministerial Summit on the Environment

Overview

More than sixty civil society organizations (CSOs) in Asia Pacific met in Bangkok on 4th September 2017, representing diverse constituencies including NGOs, women, youth and children, farmers, indigenous people, differently abled, fisher folk, people of different sexual orientation, gender identity and expression and sex characteristics, people living with and affected by HIV, workers and trade unions, migrants, community leaders and other stakeholders; all affected by the twin crises of an extractive neoliberal economic model and deepening inequalities, which are fueling climate change and environmental degradation. We reaffirm our pledge to a resource-efficient and pollution-free Asia-Pacific and a world free of pollution.

We appreciate the space provided by the United Nations Environment and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN ESCAP). We also welcome UN Environment's report "Towards a Pollution Free Planet," and express our solidarity with this aspirational goal. We hope this report will attract urgent attention to the environmental crises and inspire inclusive and sustainable solutions that benefit people and the planet.

Rich developed and industrialized countries as well as some emerging economies are the main contributors to the climate crisis. The operations of extractive and agrochemical corporations focused on profits are tolerated, and in some cases, even promoted, by developing countries. And as a result, pollution continues unabated to the detriment of the region and the globe.

The UN definition of pollution does not capture the diversity of people's realities and the lived experiences of community members. While there is a growing understanding of the issues facing our environment and the problem of pollution, an acknowledgement of the root causes and drivers of these problems is needed. Action needs to be taken on the business-as-usual framework of the global capitalist economy and corporate capture of resources and services.

Pollution is an inevitable consequence of a profit-oriented system of extractive and agrochemical industries that has benefited from corrupt government's political interests at the expense of the people and the environment. Many of the Fortune 500 companies - including Nestle, Cargill, Monsanto, and Unilever - are promoting their interests in the region by influencing multilateral and bilateral agreements that undermine people's food sovereignty, including seed sovereignty and the basis of life on the planet.

The achievement of sustainable development and freedom from pollution in Asia Pacific is blocked by systemic barriers, including the large-scale land and resource grabbing, trade and investment agreements, corporate capture, militarism and conflict, as well as patriarchy and fundamentalisms. They are directly linked to the intensification of environmental plunder and destruction of local and natural ecosystems, impacting food chains and people's health. Environmental degradation is a pervasive problem that worsens the situation of the most marginalized and vulnerable sectors of our societies, whose lives are dependent on their respective ecosystems.

We strongly advocate for Development Justice with its five transformative shifts - redistributive justice, economic justice, social, cultural and gender justice, ecological justice and accountability to the peoples - provides a practical framework for fundamental transformation in economic governance in order to achieve the twin goals of pollution free planet and agenda 2030.

State of the environment as we see it

Pollution in Asia Pacific is a reality that affects all of us. An increasing number of deaths and harmful effects on pregnant women, fertility, and fetal health are caused by air pollution and indoor air contamination, freshwater pollution, scarcity and lack of access to safe water causing water borne diseases, chemical pollution and wrongful disposal of e-waste, and the degradation of marine and terrestrial ecosystems. The governments and the UN have failed to address the fundamental drivers of

pollution, and remain market-based. It is necessary to incorporate measures to strengthen access to justice, human rights and gender sensitive approaches and to ensure people and planet's well-being throughout decision making and action. Policy responses are clearly not enough.

Air Pollution

Air pollution alone causes seven million premature deaths every year, with two out of three deaths occurring in South-East Asia and Western Pacific sub-regions. And nine out of ten people are breathing air which exceeds WHO safe levels for pollution. Emission from thermal power plants, Short Lived Climate Pollutants (SLCPs) and indoor air pollution is causing negative health impacts, such as stunted growth, respiratory illnesses and increased mortality. Without addressing these issues, the region risks falling far short of the agreed targets under Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3 on health, and the other goals. While Agenda 2030 and a pollution-free planet are being pursued, more than 1200 thermal power plants are currently being planned or are under development, in sixty-two countries. If built, they will add another 840 gigawatt to the global coal plant fleet. The majority is being planned in Asia and Africa, and is being pushed by Asian power companies. Halting this requires international action.

Intense forest and peat fires, which engulf South-east Asian countries, are also increasingly common. One recent forest fire in Indonesia was caused by the clearing of a forest for palm oil plantations.

A resource efficient and pollution free planet must derive its energy from accessible and affordable renewable energy sources. We call countries at this Summit to commit to markedly increase, in line with Paris Agreements, the share of accessible and affordable renewable energy sources whilst quickly and decisively phasing out dirty, harmful and corporate-control energy generation.

Land and Soil Pollution

In addition to air pollution, land, soil, and connected ecosystems are increasingly polluted by chemicals from industrial sources including extractive industries, use of fertilizer and pesticides, genetically engineered organisms and improper waste management. It is deleteriously impacting human health, particularly of women, children and other vulnerable groups, and will negatively impact future generations.

Many highly hazardous pesticides continue to be used in developing countries causing untold harm, including acute and chronic health problems and environmental impacts. Banned pesticides are smuggled or legally shipped from countries where they are banned. Numerous studies indicate that certain pesticides negatively affect child development, including disrupting mental and physiological growth. The creation of "cancer villages" is also a result of these developments.

The war industry also negatively impacts the environment, and its contribution to land and soil pollution has yet to be acknowledged. In Japan (Okinawa), Vietnam, the Philippines and other nations where the US currently has or formerly had military bases, hazardous and carcinogenic materials and landmines are routinely discovered in forests and agricultural lands. Local people continue to experience the legacy of this toxic contamination.

Another critical dimension of land pollution is caused by corporate capture of land for large- scale chemical-intensive monoculture, export crops and biofuels. Biofuels are promoted as an alternative source of energy however, they are still pollutive and unsustainable, in addition to removing available land for food crops. The expansion agro-plantations for biofuels and export crops lead to further dispossession of land and resources from farmers and indigenous communities. In addition, agribusiness companies with governments are promoting genetically modified food in the region that not only threatens biological and genetic integrity but also reduces biological diversity for the future.

Water pollution and scarcity

Water scarcity and deteriorating water quality are commonplace throughout the region, especially in North East and South Asia. Forty two percent of the deaths globally associated with unsafe or inadequate supply of water, sanitation and hygiene occur in Asia.

Fossil fuel and industries stand at the most prolific source of freshwater pollution. UN water estimates that the fossil fuel sector alone contaminates between fifteen to eighteen billion cubic metres of freshwater resources every year; and seventy percent of industrial wastewater is dumped untreated into waterways in developing countries. In Asia Pacific, an estimate by the ADB puts this figure at eighty percent.

Industrial fishing by mechanized trawlers not only threatens the livelihoods of millions of fisher folk but also impacts freshwater and marine ecosystem irreparably. Fisher folk communities are being displaced from their fishing areas in the sea and other bodies of water by commercial development.

Approximately sixty percent of the coastal mangroves in Asia and Pacific are being cleared for infrastructure or commercial development, and more than eighty percent of the coral reefs are at risk.

Marine ocean and coastal ecosystems are particularly threatened by plastics, micro-plastics, and trans boundary pollutants Despite recognition of trans boundary pollution and existence of a number of regional and global instruments, many countries particularly small-island states are routinely affected by trans boundary pollutants including carbon dioxide, sulphates, nitrous oxides, mercury, methyl mercury, benthos pollutants due to deep seabed mining. In addition, pollution of rivers upstream due to mine spills, pesticides and fertilizers, industrial wastes among others severely affects riverine life, food and livelihoods in downstream countries and cities.

Pollutants like chemicals, pesticides, solid wastes, mining waste, e-waste and food waste demand severe attention in terms of reduction, and the regulation of the polluters including industries and business is imperative to ensure social and environmental integrity.

Climate change

Climate change has already resulted in increased pathogens, disrupted food supply chains and associated health impacts with additions of more vector/water borne diseases. However, the Arctic permafrost which has acted as a methane and carbon sink is now melting, and threatens to destroy the atmosphere of the planet. When released, Greenhouse Gases threaten to further exacerbate our already unstable climate. Top polluter countries like China and the US are still failing to act on this.

The World Bank has estimated that by the end of the century, the coolest months in tropical South America, Africa and the Pacific are likely to be warmer than the warmest months at the end of the 20th century.

At the forefront of these environmental challenges and dispossessions are marginalized communities. Environmental and rights defenders continue to experience harassment, threats and even killings by corporate and state-sponsored forces. According to Global Witness in 2015 alone, more than three persons each week were killed while defending their communities from being dispossessed of their lands and resources.

Challenges and enablers in achieving pollution free Asia Pacific

While globally, the SDGs highlight finances, technology, and capacity building as important and necessary responses to sustainability challenges, these are more pronounced in Asia Pacific. The region will require USD 2.1 to 2.5 trillion investments per annum to achieve the SDGs. Huge financial gaps indicate that it is not possible to be generated nor shouldered within the region.

Global cooperation still has a significant role to play in financing the SDGs. An increasing emphasis on domestic resource mobilization and South-South cooperation should not be advanced as a pretext for going back on the historical responsibilities of pollution, and taking action in the spirit of the Common But Differentiated Responsibility that is based on respective capacity; a fundamental principle of global cooperation. Developed countries will have to shoulder their fair share of the burden, if any progress is to be made.

The region is home to several global technology leaders, yet on the Global Innovation Index more than a quarter of the countries in the lowest 10% are from Asia Pacific. Many countries suffer from severe capacity gaps, and will require substantial investment in institutional capacity as well as for data collection and monitoring. Partnership with the private sector that defines the role of business organizations and their responsibility in the prevention of pollution and rights violations, and the provision of compensation and clean-up for continuous contamination and disasters rather is necessary. Removing the undue faith in private sector engagement to mobilize resources is a key factor in achieving a pollution free planet.

Similarly, stakeholder engagement including with frontline and affected communities and CSOs will also be key enabling factors. However, civic space is becoming increasingly constrained in many countries in the region despite this call for partnership.

Resource efficiency is another challenge. Developing countries in the region, on an average, need five kilograms of material to produce one unit of gross domestic product (GDP), while industrialized countries need one-fifth of this. According to ESCAP resource efficiency in the region has been decreasing since 2000 - barring energy efficiency which has registered impressive gains.

Domestic material consumption and material footprint per capita is rising and so is resource intensity. This trend is highly worrying and governments in the region need to work together to reverse it. The intensifying plunder of natural resources, overproduction of consumption goods, and unequal consumption further worsens unequal access to resources of the most marginalized of the sectors; and

there is a big gap between sectors in terms of access to resources. There is an urgent need to affirm this strong inverse relation between resource consumption and sustainable development and make progress towards peoples' access to their own resources.

Key systemic issues

Despite economic growth in some countries in the region, pervasive inequalities exist in access of rights, opportunities and living conditions. Violence and discrimination on the basis of gender identity and sexual orientation, and against marginalized communities is pervasive. These fundamental and systemic issues are not being addressed adequately. A pollution free planet cannot be achieved without addressing poverty and inequality, and corporate domination of the development agenda.

Asia Pacific has 2.6 billion people trapped in poverty, 490 million going to bed hungry, 420 million without access to energy, and 1.7 billion lacking access to drinking water and sanitation. It is imperative to address rising inequalities, as the difference between rich and poor in the region is widening. Inequality entrenches poverty; eradicating poverty without a frontal attack on inequality is not possible. Gender outcome gaps are being reduced. However, many challenges persist including low representation of women in politics, governance and enterprise, violence and female genital mutilation, and discrimination in ownership of property including land. These need to be addressed through a variety of measures including legislative, policy and programmes.

Business corporations and trade agreements work in tandem to weaken public services, restrict peoples' access to natural resources and basic facilities, and concentrate wealth and power in fewer hands. New trade agreements with WTO plus provisions restrict state capacity to regulate trade for the benefit of the people and its sovereignty.

Chemical and nuclear waste pollution, destruction of ecosystems, and massive climate-altering greenhouse gas emissions are some of the direct effects of militarism that need to be addressed, as impacts stretch over several generations and can severely alter the planet's ability to sustain life. Militarism has historically been used as a tool for expropriation of resources and to enforce the current unjust and unsustainable global production and consumption systems. As such, addressing militarism is an important component in the pursuit of sustainable development.

We strongly believe that a Pollution-Free Planet cannot be achieved unless we comprehensively address the systemic issues in a development justice framework, expediting transitions in economic, social including gender, ecological and redistributive justice, as well as accountability to the people.

Reflection on (the official programme and) follow up of previous ESCAP and UN Environment resolutions

We would like to draw your attention to the Regional Implementation Plan adopted at MCED 6, Astana in 2010. The plan prioritized six areas including harmonized rapid economic growth, employment generation and environmental sustainability, promoting sustainable urban development, improving energy resource management, improving water resources management, and enhancing resilience of socio-economic development to climate change. We are disappointed to note the limited progress on the Plan where only 13 out of 62 members and associated member countries responded to the survey to measure progress on the agenda.

We call for alignment of the review of implementation of UNEA and MCED Resolutions with the tools, indicators and review framework adopted for the SDGs and expect concrete action to be taken on the nine policy pathways suggested.

We would like express our appreciation of UN Environment's support to the CSO Forum in advance of the Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD) in 2017. However, we would like to request that CSOs be given more space in the official agenda and the programme, rather than relegated to one representative on a multi-stakeholder panel. We also underline that the financial support provided by the UN should be scaled up and made more consistent to ensure a truly transparent and participatory process.

The draft report by Secretary of the UN Environment titled "Towards a Pollution Free Planet," which is the theme of UNEA 3, is welcomed. However, we are concerned to find no mention of important principles like CBDR and Polluter Pays in the draft report. Too narrow of a focus on national action completely overlooks global responsibility, which is not only an ethical and historical onus but a development justice debt. It is important to note that communities have a significant role to play in combatting pollution, and many of them still keep the knowledge of less polluting lifestyles and nature-based technologies for tackling ecosystem degradation, including from climate change. We also

find the draft report very soft on transnational responsibility of countries' business regulations, and the means of implementation including finance, technology and partnerships.

We urge the governments be accountable to the agreements made at these summits. We call for better coherence in regional environmental UN processes, specifically between MCED of ESCAP and the Regional Forum of UN Environment, and welcome the Ministerial Summit as a concrete step in that direction. We also stress that ESCAP and UN Environment should envision a greater role for communities, peoples movements and CSOs in response to their contribution in adopting and encouraging sustainable production and consumption, ecological limits, environmental protection, disaster management rescue and relief and preventing pollution.

Peoples and communities movements and CSOs contribution

Peoples' movements and communities have been protecting the environment and strengthening ecological justice in numerous ways including through resistance and creative undertakings. They are also the ones who have been paying an unduly high price for pollution and environmental degradation. Millions of people in the region are solely dependent on their ecosystems, which not only provides them with food and livelihoods, but also protects them from natural calamities. These people and communities have often found themselves at the wrong end of a failed development paradigm.

We are extremely concerned that in many countries in the region, people's movements and organizations are experiencing political repression. Their leaders are being arrested and detained, and there are also many cases of torture, disappearances and extrajudicial killings. These are often interlinked with the struggles against plunder and dispossession of their resources.

Despite this, communities are raising their voices and continue to be at the forefront of the struggles. They continue to fight oppression and repression in numerous ways, from organizing themselves, making demands on their governments, and the promotion of sustainable alternatives. These actions have resulted in improved access to resources and increased community participation, particularly for women and indigenous communities. These groups need to be encouraged and strengthened. It is high time to empower peoples' communities and other marginalized sectors of society, including youth, for a greater role on development.

We demand

Environmental pollution puts an additional burden on the poorest, most marginalized and ecosystem dependent communities. A pollution free planet requires concerted, systematic and genuine efforts to remove systemic barriers and violence. It is critical to understand the inextricable relation of pollution with poverty, inequality, gender discrimination and loss of livelihoods. Contributing factors are a growth economy, capitalism, trade dominance and malfeasance, and corporate capture and control.

The planet cannot be free of pollution with increasing concentrations of power, economic resources and wealth. In particular, if half of the planet's wealth remains with only 6 persons. The planet cannot be pollution free if half of women remain undernourished, face routine violence and discrimination, lack power to take decision and lack opportunities to work and political representation. The planet cannot be pollution free if forests are cleared of the indigenous and forest dependent and forest nurturing populations. The planet cannot be pollution free if few companies control almost all pesticides and fertilizers. The planet cannot be pollution free if big corporations own more wealth than many countries. Any effort to make the planet pollution free will have to factor in these critical considerations of communities, water, culture, and nature.

We demand enhanced commitment and swift action on a number of areas that will facilitate a pollution free environment:

For UN and international institutions:

1. We demand policy coherence and enforcement and coordination mechanisms and establishing a policy framework creating synergy in prevention of pollution and achieving agenda 2030.

2. We call for access to environmental information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters, which are universal environmental rights that reflect the essential elements of sustainable development.

3. Greater attention and response to increasing militarization and its impact on the environment. Recognition that the military industrial complex as an industry that impacts not just sovereign rights of peoples, but also ecosystems. The military industrial complex is also accountable and required to follow environmental impact standards, as well as compensation for their past and present environmental crimes.

We call for our governments to:

4. Adopt new systems of measuring environmental health which incorporate social dimensions including sexual and reproductive health and rights.

5. Adopt sustainability principles as the central paradigm, align national budgets and finance with sustainable development priorities and put in place policies, laws and regulations that internalize environmental and social costs, including occupational safety and health policies to protect workers from occupational hazards and risks, adopt precautionary principles in regulation to review chemicals, pesticides, GMOs and other toxic substances, review of development projects and its impacts to critical ecosystems, and a strong policy on environmental standards. And reform fossil fuel subsidies as an important step to moving towards a pollution free planet.

6. Enhance state and corporate accountability and compliance with environmental regulations, including granting appropriate inspection powers to authorities. These should incorporate principles such as polluter pays, intergenerational equity and common but differentiated responsibility, respective capability and decent work. Corporations responsible for harming the health of workers and communities through their production processes and products should be made accountable for their action including compensation and clean-up.

7. Increase opportunities for engagement with grassroots communities, including mechanisms for social dialogue throughout policy and decision-making processes at all levels and enhanced participation of all relevant stakeholders so as to adopt policies that reflect their views and concerns.

8. Promote people-led, scientific, traditional knowledge and evidence-based solutions to the problems of pollution, and move away from technological fixes that do not address the root causes of the problem and bring adverse consequences to the environment and livelihoods.

9. Ensure policy for and support the implementation of agroecology as well as strengthening farmers and small food producers' movements to advance agroecology.

10. Stop the unequal trade treaties that are signed in secret and without the people's participation, and illicit financial flows and its impact on environment

11. Create an enabling policy for sustainable and environment-friendly, pro-people jobs and social enterprises.

12. Create an enabling environment for participation of people's movements, CSOs, and environmental and human rights defenders and ensure that they are protected from detention, disappearance and harassments.

13. Provide security to indigenous peoples' rights and environmental defenders as well as their rights to lands, territories and resources in order to ensure the protection of customary forests that are playing vital role in the purification of the polluted atmosphere.

14. Eliminate the impact of workers' exposure to pollution in hazardous and dangerous industries and ensure a safe working environment.

15. Under a just transition framework, we call our governments to establish compensation, employment, skills development, and social protection measures for workers in sectors and their respective supply chains that will be affected by a shift to environment- friendly and pro-people industries and practices.

UN Environment regional consultation with major groups and stakeholders of West Asia

Amman, Jordan, 25-26 September 2017

Regional Consultation Meeting of Civil Society Major Groups and Stakeholders in preparation for the third United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA3) of the United Nations Environment (UNEP) and the seventeen Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum (GMGSF17)

We, the participants of Civil Society Major Groups and Stakeholders representatives of West Asia, have met in Amman, Jordan on 25th-26th September 2017 for the Regional Consultation Meeting to prepare and develop our statement of West Asia to UNEA-3 to be held in Nairobi, Kenya 4th-6th December 2017.

We acknowledge that the earth's natural resources, including clean air, oceans and freshwater, are fundamental for human survival, prosperity and well-being.

Our humanitarian vision is to protect our people and the environment from the harmful effects of radiation and pollution. This is extremely pertinent to West Asia, a region that is suffering from multiple forms of pollution and environmental degradation. West Asia is victim to extreme environmental injustice caused by, but not limited to, the following: conflict, war and occupation; population displacement; the failure of West Asian governments to meet their obligations towards international environmental treaties, conventions and protocols; non-compliant sectors, namely transport and industry; poor human rights legislation and policies; lack of involvement of civil societies in environmental policy; poor waste management; oil spills; dredging, artificial reefs; and inefficient resource management across sectors, including agriculture.

We are deeply concerned about the environmental atrocities driven by war and occupation. In the West Bank and Gaza where Israeli occupation is blatantly complicit in the unlawful exploitation of the natural and built environment. Restricting Palestinians from access to aquifers and other sources of water; the alarming levels of raw and partially treated sewage flooding Gaza's beach; the spraying of toxic pesticides on Palestinian farmlands; and the uprooting of trees and razing of Palestinian agricultural land are all examples of discriminatory policies employed by occupation. In Yemen, the ongoing military operations, through the bombing and destruction of buildings, infrastructure and natural resources, have generated a calamitous environmental footprint with long-lasting pollution.

We are also deeply concerned about the environmental impact of the Syrian crisis on Syria and on neighbouring countries. The Syrian refugee influx has aggravated and impaired political, economic, and security challenges, affecting trade, banking and tourism and has increased unemployment among young people.

As such, the following was agreed upon:

1. We strongly urge the United Nations Environment to address the most direct root causes of environmental destruction and mass migration in the region; war, occupation and conflict. Complicit states must be pressured to immediately halt military campaigns and dismantle Israeli occupation that result in unlawful environmental damage and resource expropriation. We also call upon the United Nations Environment to push for sending fact-finding missions to investigate environmental infringements in Syria, Iraq, Yemen, the West Bank and Gaza.

2. We call on West Asia governments to conduct a real Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) when required, with the full engagement of local affected communities and stakeholders.

3. We call upon West Asia governments and private sectors to effectively engage with, financially support partnerships with civil society organizations in activities involving environmental governance and environmental protection.

4. We strongly request West Asian governments to work on building the capacity of the environmental judicial system across the region. This would require national environmental awareness programs with an emphasis on matters of environmental governance, including laws, international conventions and agreements. This would require an open-source database that is easily accessible to the public. We also call on governments to strongly commit to invest heavily on research and advanced clean technologies.

5. We encourage intra-regional cooperation on environmental laws, particularly those concerning trans-boundary pollution. The UN Environment must play a key role in bringing together

governments, industry, academia, private sector and civil society organizations society to work on a unified goal of environmental sustainability.

6. We call on UN environment to help boost accountability efforts by governments and civil society organizations to hold culprits of environmental infringement, including but not limited to the private sector, legally and financially liable.

7. We call on UN Environment to support and facilitate the engagement between West Asian governments and civil society organizations on neutral and accredited monitoring of environmental damage.

8. We urge West Asian governments to implement the "Polluter Pays Principle" in the form of eco-fees, whereby the polluter bears the costs of precautionary and preventative measures, protecting local communities and stakeholders.

9. We request that West Asian governments forge a transformative alliance between private sectors and civil society that will drive forward an innovative, productive, resource efficient low carbon and pollution free economy as a means to deliver the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

10. We urge West Asian governments to acknowledge the impact of refugees on the environment and natural resources. More specifically, we call on UN Environment and governments to respond to the increasing pressure and impacts of the Syrian crisis in Lebanon on the natural resources and ecosystem, arising from the sudden increase of 37% of the population due to the addition of 1.8 million displaced persons and refugees. The displaced population is significantly affecting the fragile environmental situation in the region of West Asia.

11. We strongly encourage West Asian governments to take the required action to combat all forms of pollution including use of plastics, hazardous materials, pesticides, coal incineration of plastics and waste, and to ban methyl tertiary-butyl ether (MTBE) pollutant as a gasoline additive, as well as address waste management by monitoring compliance with regulatory frameworks.

12. We call upon West Asia Governments to ban and combat Illegal Trade of Hazardous Waste and Wild Fauna and Flora.

13. We, the civil society organizations express our willingness and commitment to:

(a) Our role as partners in conserving the environment and addressing climate change challenges in West Asia;

(b) Work with governments and stakeholders to promote a resource efficient and pollution-free region, sound environmental management and sustainable use of natural resources;

(c) Work closely with local communities to transmit their priorities and concerns;

(d) Play a pivotal role in bridging efforts between public, private and non-governmental actors to expedite environmental rehabilitation, and to ensure that such efforts are executed in a bottom-up manner that is inclusive and sensitive to the priorities of those who are most affected;

(e) And, support the Iraqi Resolution on pollution control in areas affected by terrorist operations, occupation and armed conflicts and call for a wider investigation on the impact of conflicts on pollution.

UN Environment regional consultation with major groups and stakeholders of North America

Toronto, Canada, 26 October 2017

Key Messages from the North American Civil Society Consultation for the 3rd Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly

Background

UN Environment's North America Office, in partnership with the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, the Honourable Elizabeth Dowdeswell, convened a full-day consultation on Thursday, 26 October 2017 at the Lieutenant Governor's Suite in Queen's Park, Toronto, Ontario. The consultation provided stakeholders with an opportunity to make inputs into the third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-3), taking place in Nairobi, Kenya from 4 – 6 December 2017, on the theme *Towards a Pollution-Free Planet*. The consultation attracted over 50 participants representing different Major Groups from Canadian- and United States-based accredited and non-accredited organizations, as well as government officials. It featured expert panels which discussed the economic costs of pollution, the role of cities in addressing it, and steps that the Canadian and U.S. governments are taking to engage with UNEA-3.

Knowledge Keeper James Bird opened the consultation with an invocation noting that the land where the meeting took place is sacred and home to many indigenous peoples from across Turtle Island. The Honourable Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, welcomed participants and spoke about the linkages between environmental stewardship, economic prosperity, and social cohesion, and their relationship to the pursuit of sustainable development. Barbara Hendrie, Regional Director of UN Environment's North America Office, emphasized that there does not need to be a trade-off between environmental protection and economic prosperity, and provided context about UNEA-3 and the aims of the consultation.

Key Points from Panel Discussions

The first panel focused on the economics of pollution and opportunities for change. Moderated by North American Regional Representative Christian Ledwell of the International Institute for Sustainable Development, this panel included:

- Karti Sandilya, Senior Advisor, Pure Earth and Global Alliance on Health and Pollution
- Tom Rand, Managing Partner, ArcTern Ventures
- Laura Zizzo, CEO of Zizzo Strategy, and Board Member of the Clean Air Partnership
- Dr. Leonardo Trasande, Director, Section of Environmental Pediatrics, NYU School of Medicine

Panelists noted the high costs and impacts of pollution on human health and well-being, with the recent report of the Lancet Commission on Health and Pollution finding that pollution leads to over 9 million deaths per year globally—more than all deaths from malaria, tuberculosis, and

HIV combined. Panelists noted that while the overall number of deaths is an important metric, pollution reduction interventions are needed to prevent other impacts as well, including morbidity (disease) and disability. The costs of pollution in Canada were highlighted, and it was noted that Canada will be chairing the G7 next year and thus is well-positioned to use this role to encourage the G7 to take a strong stance on curbing pollution. The need for governments to create clear market signals for the private sector to address pollution with metrics and targets for reduction was emphasized. Panelists noted that it can be challenging to introduce regulation unless a clear technological solution already exists, emphasizing the need for innovation.

The second panel focused on the role of cities and other sub-national governments in reducing pollution. Moderated by North American Regional Representative Michelle Wyman, who is the Executive Director of the National Council for Science and the Environment, this panel included:

- Ewa Jackson, Managing Director, ICLEI Canada
- Rob Kerr, Community Energy Planner, Quality Urban Energy Systems of Tomorrow

- Ronald Macfarlane, Manager, Healthy Public Policy, Toronto Public Health
- Dr. Miriam Diamond, Professor, University of Toronto

This panel addressed the strong potential of cities to act on reducing pollution and curbing greenhouse gas emissions in situations where they are empowered to do so and when they are provided with adequate resources and access to needed technologies. While urban pollution is inevitable, cities offer opportunities for reducing resource use and pollution per capita and for more efficient waste management. Cities can lead in these efforts by using an integrated approach to implement sustainable solutions by engaging with local actors, setting-up monitoring and measuring plans early on, and addressing financial barriers. There was a call to build a strong case for curbing pollution through economic cost analysis, case studies and pilot projects, and through bottom-up citizen empowerment. Speakers highlighted that investing in environmental protection is economically viable with numerous benefits and should be regarded and communicated as a positive change.

In the afternoon, government representatives from Canada and the United States presented key inputs that their governments are preparing for UNEA-3 in a session chaired by Barbara Hendrie. Jennifer Kerr, Acting Director of Air Emissions Priorities, Environment & Climate Change Canada, spoke on a range of air pollution reduction initiatives being undertaken by the Government of Canada, including submitting a resolution on air pollution for consideration by UNEA-3. Walker Smith, Director of Global Affairs & Policy from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), highlighted the U.S. government's proposal for a standalone resolution on lead paint given the absence of adequate lead paint regulation in many global jurisdictions.

Participants engaged in a lively plenary discussion through Q&A sessions with all three panels, as well as in a final session in which the North American Regional Representatives reported back the key messages they had noted from discussions throughout the day and welcomed further feedback.

Key Messages

The following key messages emerged from the dialogue on opportunities and challenges in pollution reduction.

Call for Governments

- There was a call for a global agreement to combat air pollution, the world's single largest environmental health risk.
- Countries should closely measure the burden of disease and economic cost of disability related to the exposure of pollution, while further understanding the burden of disease from emerging contaminants.
- Countries should enforce existing bilateral and multilateral environmental agreements to address pollution. Government ministries should not work in silos but across vertical and horizontal sectors to implement these agreements.
- Countries should ensure that UNEA resolutions are accompanied with mechanisms for cooperation and finance, considering knowledge and capacity gaps, to be implemented effectively.
- Lead, which has serious consequences for the health of children, is under-regulated globally; action needs to be taken to ban lead in paint.
- Unintended consequences of consumption need to be realized; the more we consume, the more waste is generated. We need to navigate towards reduced consumption while maintaining equity.
- We need a better understanding of the impact of endocrine disruptors and persistent organic pollutants on human health and the environment, while also looking at the consequences of increased plastic marine litter into the ocean and the food chain.

Citizen Engagement

- Acting on pollution requires the active engagement of a wide coalition of stakeholders, including indigenous peoples, labour movements, rural communities, faith based organizations, youth, and the poor.

- Call for laws for the private sector to disclose and label toxic substances. Citizens should have the 'right to know' about the use of chemicals and toxic substances in products. This information needs to be accessible and understandable to all.
- There was a call for a rights-based approach to a clean environment.
- More investment in high quality education is essential to keep the public scientifically literate and engaged, with an understanding of how everyday activities are linked with pollution.

Innovation and the Private Sector

- More investment is needed to innovate and scale-up the deployment of clean technologies that reduce pollution.
- Regulations should be accompanied with policies that incentivize innovation and entrepreneurial efforts in solutions, especially for high priority areas such as plastic and chemicals. The private sector needs clear market signals with metrics and targets for reduction in order to play a larger role in addressing pollution. Companies are starting to see a long- term economic advantage in securing a sustainable supply chain.
- Costs of pollution should not be externalized. Regulations that use 'polluter pays' or 'producer pays' principles (such as extended producer liability policies) should be implemented.
- Large industries as well as small-to-medium sized enterprises contributing to pollution should be regulated.
- Costs of recycling are too high; regulations should require companies to consider the total life-cycle impact of their products to divert waste streams and move producers to create a virtuous cycle towards a circular economy. It was noted that some of the ways countries are recycling is by shipping hazardous waste to other countries.
- The impact on the environment of high-tech industries focused on smart technologies, which take up a lot of resources, rare earth minerals, and generate waste, should be further examined.

The Role of Cities

- Governments should empower and enable local governments to lead on reducing pollution, especially greenhouse gas emissions.
- Urbanization can provide health and environmental benefits when cities are built to create healthy livable communities, with low carbon footprints, access to clean safe drinking water, sound waste management systems, affordable and mixed housing, green spaces, efficient transit, more walkways and bike lanes, energy efficient heating and cooling, and sensitivity to noise.
- Cities can use an integrated approach to implementation, by starting with simple solutions: win-win actions, with multiple benefits; engaging institutions and stakeholders; setting out monitoring and measurement plans early; mainstreaming financial aspects of planning and integrating them into existing framework and operations, while tailoring messages to different actors.
- Cities can use tax incentives to encourage buy-in services and show leadership by conducting sustainable public procurement practices to support the circular economy in creating a low carbon future.

Overall, participants expressed the importance of depoliticizing pollution and framing it in a broader context, emphasizing that it impacts everyone, especially citizens of low- and middle- income countries. The importance of engaging the public and marginalized communities in global environmental decision-making was noted. The significance of UNEA-3 in making a global case for action to address pollution and to inspire a greater political will to achieve a low carbon future was reaffirmed. Regional Representatives, Christian Ledwell and Michelle Wyman, are looking forward to sharing the perspectives and lessons learned from North America with stakeholders at UNEA-3.

UN Environment regional consultation with major groups and stakeholders of Europe

Szentendre, Hungary, 9-19 November 2017

On the 9th & 10th of November 2017, the participants of the regional MGS meeting of UNEP-EUROPE met in Szentendre, Hungary and prepared their input for the 3rd United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA 3).

The evidence from the UNEA publication *"Towards a Pollution Free Planet"* indicates that no level of pollution is safe, that much of the damage done by pollution is irreversible but, also, that pollution is manmade and thus completely preventable, and that urgent action is needed for a transformation to a pollution free planet, based on principles of environmental sustainability and human rights.

Civil Society Major Groups and Stakeholders call on UNEA to ensure that all decisions taken at UNEA-3 are in line with the following principles and approaches:

- **Implement Rio principles (UNCED) in particular the most relevant to pollution, namely the** Precautionary principle and the Polluter Pays principle and Extended Producer Responsibility, the Right to Information, Public Participation and Access to justice.
- **Guarantee Human rights and all the related rights: Pollution contributes to and aggravates** environmental challenges which have adverse effects on the full enjoyment of human rights, including the right to the highest attainable standard of health; the right to life; the right to an adequate standard of living; the right to food; and the right to water and sanitation and the right to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment and the right of future generations to a pollution-free planet (inter-generational equity).
- **Ensure Procedural rights**: importance of public access to, and wider availability of information relating to the environment; as well as effective participation of the public - in particular of groups most exposed and most vulnerable to pollution - into relevant decision making, to empower communities to contribute to addressing the sources and impacts of pollution; to ensure Free Prior and Informed Consent, and prompt an effective access to judicial remedies, and to ensure equal rights for women, indigenous peoples, marginalized groups and deprived communities.
- **Ensure an Integrated and preventive approach** to address air, soil, and water pollution from all sources. It is critical to ensure that addressing one pollution problem does not create another issue of pollution. All MEAs should follow a comprehensive and integrated approach.
- **Health and environmental impact** should be assessed at project design stage by independent institutions and addressed before the adoption of policies, investments, measures and activities from both the public and private sectors. The outcomes of the assessment should become publicly available and ensure that contributions from civil society groups, including impacted communities are well considered.
- **Aim towards a Circular Economy:** Governments should progressively ban the use and recycling of products containing toxic chemicals, including ones already banned by international treaties: reduce to its maximum the production and use of hazardous chemicals from an early stage, including the design stage and "close the loop" of resource use and product lifecycles through greater recycling, recovery and reuse and creating decent, green, and gender-equitable jobs, especially for the youth.
- **Apply the subsidiarity principle** for a pollution free planet to ensure that decisions are taken as closely as possible to citizens, a crucial role of committed regional and local governments to prevent pollution.
- **Sustainable Consumption incentives:** States should design national policies and programs engaging citizens in promoting sustainable consumption and mobility, reducing waste production as well as energy and water saving and sustainable resource use.
- **Green and social banking**: Ensure that international financial institutions and development banks necessarily implement the principles of green investment and the requirements of international environmental agreements including the Basel, Rotterdam, Stockholm, Minamata and Aarhus conventions, the Long Range Transboundary Air Pollution and Espoo Conventions and their protocols, the Climate Framework Convention and the Convention for the protection of Biodiversity.

- **Apply principles of Business sustainability and human rights:** UN Environment should, when engaging with the private sector implement ethical principles and apply human rights and environmental safeguards to engage with industry, including the Ruggie principles and the SA 8000 standard.

- **Elaborate the Treaty on Business and Human Rights:** UNEA should encourage member states to participate in the negotiations of the UN Treaty for Transnational Corporations and Human Rights, strengthening the obligation of corporations to avoid and remedy human rights abuses they cause through pollution.

- **Emphasize the need for States to protect environmental and human rights defenders**, first and foremost to end the killing of environmental and human rights defenders such as Berta Caceres and others.

- **Green and socially-just international trade rules**: Ensure that the prevention of pollution and protection of human health and the environment have priority over investor and business interests, by ensuring that all bilateral, regional and multilateral economic, trade and investment agreements (such as "One Belt - One Road" between China, Russia, Kazakhstan and the WTO), as well as dispute resolution processes enforcing these agreements, are consistent with MEAs and human rights.

- **Green investment programs**, such as in the framework of the Green Climate Fund, should be accessible for direct access by local communities and civil society organizations and should ensure that all investment projects apply prior strategic environmental, social and health impact assessments (SEIA) and safeguard human rights.

- **Technological developments** should concentrate on reducing hazards, increasing resource efficiency and substituting non-chemical alternatives in industrial and agricultural activities.

- **Step up action to address military sector pollution**: UN Environment should increase pressure on governments to implement its Resolution "Protection of the environment in areas affected by armed conflict" adopted by UNEA Second session in May 2016. As the situation in armed conflict areas is not improving UNEA should further develop its work addressing pollution by the military sector and from military conflict, including containment and clean-up of former and active military sites.

Civil society calls on UNEA to:

1. INCREASE CIVIL SOCIETY SUPPORT AND SPACE

Deliver on the commitment to increase and support the civil society space at UNEA, in line with Paragraph 88h of the Rio+20 outcome document, by reversing the shrinking space and funds for NGOs to engage with governments at UNEA. Take measures to reduce lobbying from polluting industries by:

- Including ethical rules for partnerships between UN Environment and the private sector,
- Supporting the development of a global fund to address pollution based on a certain share from the turnover of polluting industries.

We call on UNEA-3:

- For enabling conditions, including funding, to strengthen the capacity of civil society organizations, at international, regional and national levels;
- To monitor the activities of governments and aid in achieving their obligations under the Multilateral Environmental Agreements;
- And to stimulate public control over environmental policies, including at the national level, which is as an important factor in the fight against corruption;
- To ensure continued active engagement with civil society and governments during the intercessional period between UNEAs and involve key ministries, civil society organizations and other stakeholders. Governments and stakeholder groups after UNEA-3 should discuss how to contribute to the implementation of the results of UNEA-3, the involvement in the implementation of the decisions of UNEA-3 and the preparations for UNEA-4;
- To report back to UNEA-4 about the allocation and progress of funding dedicated to civil society engagement and in particular to ensuring their role to monitor implementation of MEAs.

2. RAPID ACTION TO PREVENT AND REDUCE POLLUTION TO AIR, WATER, SOIL

UNEA-3 should address pollution of air, water and soil due to industrial and agricultural production, and implement rapid action to prevent and reduce emissions from these sectors.

Chemicals, Land and Soil

Hazardous chemicals are a great threat to ecosystems and human health, as they often create irreversible damage once dispersed in the environment and are almost impossible to extract, even at greatest costs.

We therefore call on UNEA-3 to:

- Promote agroecology and the effective phase out of manufacturing, import, sale and use of highly hazardous pesticides in 50 countries by 2025; 150 countries by 2030, including exports of banned pesticides in the EU to non-EU countries.
- Effectively phase out and restrict hazardous substances, especially those mentioned in the UN Environment report *"Towards a Pollution Free Planet"*, on a national, regional and global level.
- Create a global legally binding agreement on disclosing chemicals in products along the supply chain, including information about their health effects, safe disposal and recycling. This agreement must take into account the full life cycle approach, including full access to information about chemicals in products for the public, all the way to recyclers/re-users and waste dealers.
- Create a global fund to contain and properly clean up POPs as well as obsolete pesticide stockpiles.
- Decrease the number of incinerators in the region, especially those operating with old technologies.

- Ensure that old technologies, including highly hazardous pesticides and incinerators are not dumped in developing and transition countries to avoid continued corporate profits at the expense of public health and the environment.
- To end the illegal trade of chemicals.

Waste

With fast growing amounts of waste, including hazardous waste (e.g. e-waste), and persistent waste (e.g. plastics), polluting the oceans, air and soil, urgent action is required. We therefore call on UNEA-3 to:

- Ensure the transition from waste land filling and incineration to waste minimization and safe recycling (including composting). This transition should be promoted and supported politically and financially. Strong incentives to adopt more sustainable lifestyles channelled through increasing public participation, information and awareness raising campaigns and support to CSOs.
- Promote the Zero Waste approach by designing and managing products and processes to systematically avoid and eliminate the volume and toxicity of waste and materials, conserve and recover all resources, and not burn or bury them. Implementing Zero Waste will eliminate all discharges to land, water or air that are a threat to planetary, human, animal and plant health.
- Illegal waste activities including open burning and trade need to be addressed by implementing and enforcing control mechanisms, applying sanctions, as well as stimulating public participation through mapping and reporting. Decent and safe jobs, especially for the youth, can be provided through community based waste management aimed at waste minimization and safe recycling.

Air Pollution

As is clear from the annual 7 million deaths from air pollution, particles and mercury emissions from coal fired power plants and industrial enterprises and clouds of radioactive ruthenium-106, there is an urgent need to limit emissions from energy production, intensive agriculture, transport and industrial air pollution.

We therefore call on UNEA-3 to:

- Restrict car use: urgently address road traffic as a major contributor to air quality deterioration and therefore endeavour to achieve car-free cities by 2030 by offering effective, clean and affordable public transportation and integrated shared mobility; priority should be given to the phasing out of diesel fuels in the next two decades in all transport and other usages and to reduce global vehicle emissions by at least 90 per cent through the introduction of advanced on the road vehicle emissions standards in 5 years.
- Restrict shipping emissions: reduce global shipping emissions by adopting widespread emissions control areas to soon significantly curb SO2, NOX and black carbon emissions from this sector and work with expedience for the phasing out of Heavy Fuel Oil worldwide and the immediate ban of it in the Arctic.
- Restrict industrial farming: ensure the immediate reduction of air pollutants deriving from farming and agriculture (ammonia, PM, ozone, methane) by requiring large livestock operations to file an annual pollution management and reduction plans and setting zero-emission targets.
- Provide safe household energy: Provide alternative and accessible energy for household use (e.g. cooking and heating) while also enacting and enforcing appropriate emission limits ensuring that alternative sources of energy other than biomass and solid fuel burning are utilized for heating and cooking in households so as to prevent and curb the current impact of these activities on air pollution.
- Eliminate government subsidies for waste to energy incinerators and cement kilns.
- Implement zero waste strategies: Ensure segregation of waste at source for reuse, recycling and composting, zero waste procurement practices including non-toxic zero waste products; reusable shipping containers; reduced packaging; recycled and compostable products; remanufactured equipment; and leased, rented, or shared equipment.

- End open burning: Adopt bans and effective penalties on open burning of agricultural residues, other wastes and use of private fireplaces in cities.
- End coal and nuclear: Agree on a moratorium for new coal and nuclear plants. Ensure that no new industries are set up using fuels that are known to cause a health burden on the populations and impact climate including fossil and nuclear fuels. Existing coal industries should be phased out by 2030 in developed nations and by 2040 in developing countries.

Marine pollution

1. Marine pollution from plastics

Every year, 8 million tons of plastic waste enters the oceans. It is estimated that by 2050, there will be more plastic waste than fish in the oceans. After decades of voluntary action, global plastic pollution has not improved. Therefore, UNEA-3 should call for:

- Immediate action by all member states to ban single use plastics and micro beads, reduce production, use and releases of plastic, plastic products and packaging, ensure increased monitoring and reporting of plastic pollution in ecosystems and human bodies, as well as increase pricing of plastic packaging, in line with the polluter pays principle. Member states shall report back on progress achieved at the next UN Environment Assembly in 2019.
- Promote safer alternatives to incineration and land filling of marine litter.
- Establish an ad-hoc open-ended working group that presents its recommendations for a stronger global architecture to combat plastic pollution at the next UNEA in 2019, ensuring the control of plastic pollution at every stage of the plastic life cycle.

2. Marine pollution by ships and oil/gas transportation

The shipping sector is main source of oil pollution and (toxic and hazardous) waste dumping in oceans. We call on UNEA-3 to include in the resolution on reducing marine pollution to:

- Create a public reporting obligation (PRTR protocol) for ships dumping/washing oil and other waste into sea and introduction of penalty system.
- Agree on the need to ban the recycling of end-of-life vessels in the intertidal zone (i.e. beaching method), and to support the development of facilities that can ensure full containment of ship-borne pollutants. Ensure the building of toxic-free ships that can be dismantled in line with a cradle-to-cradle approach.
- Create a GPS-based APP to monitor ships spilling waste, oil to be developed by UN and partners.
- Agree to phase out of use of heavy oil for ship engines in all areas including the arctic by 2020.
- Agree on a moratorium on building oil and gas pipelines under the sea.

3. Marine pollution from land-based sources

A variety of worldwide industries (including mining, agriculture, aquaculture and fisheries) cause toxic pollution of water sources, often in ecologically sensitive areas and indigenous lands. We call on UNEA-3 to include in the resolution on reducing water pollution to:

- Commit to reducing from all major rivers and waterways existing and emerging hazardous substances. Ensure containment and clean-up of liquid waste / tailing ponds from ongoing as well as legacy (old) industrial and mining activities; to be financed by the mining and chemical industry.
- Ensure municipal waste management, in particular packaging and hazardous (liquid) waste, including separate collection and treatment in all river basins and coastal areas.
- Support a global programme for decentralized wastewater treatment systems in all river basins and coastal areas.

Fresh water pollution

The industrial agriculture sector is another one of the biggest polluters of fresh and underground water sources, we call on UNEA-3 to include in the resolution on reducing water pollution to:

- Give financial incentives to farmers for the reduction of and phase out of all uses of pesticides and synthetic fertilizer, which will significantly reduce costs of water cleaning to provide drinking water quality.
- Give tax incentives (such as reduced VAT) for organic agriculture that does not pollute groundwater with chemicals and nitrates to increase consumer demand.

ANNEX to Europe meeting

Waste

Minimization of waste at the source, reuse and recycling should play key roles in national and local waste management strategies. Waste should be recognized as a resource.

Lack of **recycling and waste separation** infrastructure leads to land filling of valuable resources, including textiles, plastics, paper, aluminum and glass. Incentives should be developed to encourage proper waste management and disposal both on the household and company level.

In many countries of the UNECE region, most of the **waste is land filled** and a big part of it ends up in illegal dumps. In Ukraine, there are 6.7 thousand dumps, many of them illegal. This leads to the contamination of air, water, and soil affecting human health and biodiversity.

Obsolete pesticides are still an important problem in former USSR and western Balkans. They must be treated properly in order to minimize risks.

Hazardous waste (e.g. medical waste, radioactive waste (including pollution from military activity), electronic waste, industrial waste (historic and new), mining waste, chemical industry waste (hazardous substances), and construction waste) should not be mixed in municipal waste streams and should be collected and treated separately. Hazardous waste must be disposed of in purpose-built incinerators or landfills which can safely destroy or contain hazardous material. Require the same rules and hazardous substance thresholds in recycled material as for virgin material to avoid re-injecting toxic substances into the economy through recycling.

Uncontrolled **burning of household waste** (detrimental to human health and environment) is still happening in many parts of the region. Permits and registration issued by regional environmental authorities should register regenerated types of waste and require producers to use best available technologies.

Specific policies dedicated to the safe management of **nuclear and other radioactive waste** are needed in the region.

Waste to energy are sources of toxic chemical emissions and releases and they are an obstacle to waste minimization and recycling. If waste incineration is occurring, adequate treatment of waste ashes is required. However, no public investment should be made in the incineration of household waste. This is especially problematic for countries with inefficient or inexistent waste segregation systems.

Lack of adequate treatment facilities of wastewater is a source of water pollution, including hormone-disrupting substances. Illegal dumping into rivers and streams occurs in the region.

Low environmental awareness and through away lifestyles stimulate resource consumption and waste creation and foments pollution. Awareness raising on waste minimization, reuse and recycling to ensure a cultural change in attitude and behaviour is needed. Furthermore, waste minimization, upcycling and recycling should be explored for new job creation in the region.

The development of grassroots networks of individuals with shared values, NGOs, private sector alliances, professional bodies, etc. are need in order to advocate for personal, household and national waste management.

Air Pollution

Air pollution is a silent and invisible killer causing the premature death of around 9 million people annually, while also worsening the health conditions and well-being of many more. Such dramatic outcome is mostly suffered by populations in developing countries. The 68th World Health Assembly on May 26, 2015, has recommended that States redouble their efforts to identify, address and prevent health impacts of air pollution. Air pollution also has negative impacts on nature and biodiversity, crops, natural vegetation, historical buildings and monuments. We are supportive of the

recommendations of the recent scientific report of UN Environment "Towards a Pollution Free Planet" and urge Members states to act by implementing preventive policies and measures.

Action needs to be taken immediately on different types and sources of outdoor and indoor air pollution, the combination of which can also lead to unpredictable health burdens.

Therefore the GA urges member states to:

- Adopt, by 2020, national air quality programmes providing ambitious reductions standards and policies to comply with a planet free of pollution.
- Adopt and implement the World Health Organization air quality guidelines
- Invest in strong and reliable air quality monitoring systems and make the data publicly available;
- Adopt and apply effective enforcement measures against polluters and utilize tax barriers to reduce polluting activities.
- Address the air pollution originating from transport (e.g. road transport, shipping, airplanes), by offering effective, clean and affordable public transportation and develop adequate infrastructure in order for cities to mainly rely on non-motorised transport by 2030;
- Phase out diesel fuels in the next two decades in all transport and other usages being a main source for deadly particulate emissions and NOx in cities.
- Reduce global vehicle emissions by at least 90 per cent through the introduction of advanced road vehicle emissions standards in 5 years.
- Adopt emissions control areas to soon cut emissions from global shipping causing high SO2 and NOX emissions and work with expedience for the phasing out of HFO worldwide.
- Immediately ban Heavy Fuel Oil use in shipping in the Arctic and other ecologically sensitive areas.
- Expand green spaces in urban areas to improve ambient air quality in cities and make green areas easily accessible to all in cities.
- Reduce the non-mobile machinery emissions by favouring the adoption of qualitative standards and low emission zones especially in urban areas.
- Ensure that no new industries are set up using polluting fuels that are known to be responsible for heavy health burden on the populations and impact climate. Existing coal industries should be phased out by 2030 in developed nations and by 2040 in developing countries.
- Increase the share of non-polluting renewable energy sources such as solar, wind, and tidal to 36 per cent by 2030.
- Design national programs engaging citizens in adopting healthy diets, reducing waste production as well as energy consumption and methods of sustainable transport.
- Avoid resorting to incineration facilities when the substance can be disposed of by reuse or recycle.
- Reduce emissions from industrial sources, including mercury and uranium, and ensure that industries adopt and implement BAT/BEP and comply with emission limit values, including prevention benchmarks under BAT concepts.
- Provide alternative and accessible energy for households (e.g. cooking and heating).
- Enact and enforce appropriate limits ensuring that alternative sources of energy other than biomass and solid fuel burning are utilized to prevent and curb the current impact on air pollution.
- Support sustainable and organic agricultural and farming initiatives to facilitate transition to extensive and sustainable farming.
- Abolish harmful subsidies and adopt restrictions to the use of pesticides and fertilizers which are affecting the air quality and well-being of the populations.

- Engage in programs ensuring the immediate reduction of air pollutants deriving from manure and agriculture. (Ammonia, PM, ozone, methane) requiring large livestock operations to file an annual pollution management and reduction plan.
- Provide incentives to local governments to prevent disasters and emergencies originating from wildfire and their impact on air quality and people's health.

Chemicals, Land and Soil

Our region, which has a very heterogeneous level of policy regulation, institutional strength, public awareness and means, faces new and old challenges resulting from chemical pollution.

The main pollution threats for the region are:

- Highly hazardous pesticides poisoning farmers, children, citizens and harm the environment
- Many obsolete POPs and pesticides stockpiles are still not secured and cleaned up
- Irresponsible mining is destroying landscapes, the environment and pose serious threats to human health. At the same time, often companies are not held accountable because they are registered in offshore countries and declare bankruptcy after exploiting.
- Hazardous chemicals in products such as POPs, heavy metals, mercury, EDCs, nanomaterials. CMRs are dangerous for consumers, especially for children and pregnant women. There is no disclosure or sufficient labelling of ingredients that enables consumers to make an informed decision.
- There is an increase of new incinerators in the region, many of them using old technology, which leads to even more emissions of dioxin and other very harmful chemicals.
- The exposure to hazardous chemicals is ubiquitous in our region, with a high percentage of the population living near hot spots. Although a lot is known about some hazardous chemicals, we do not have sufficient information about mixture effects.
- Radioactive pollution is also a major concern for the region and needs to be acted upon.
- Chemical pollution during military conflict and at former and active military sites destroys the environment of sometimes large areas, and cause harm to health.

Root causes for pollution and how they could be addressed:

- Enforcement of existing regulation and surveillance is not in place or scarce.
- National and regional, including EU, regulation does not protect the environment and health sufficiently. It is necessary to strengthen and implement the core Rio principles.
- Industry that is polluting, either in production, extraction or retailing, is not held accountable for their negative environmental and social impacts. It is essential to end the externalization of cost.
- Enormous amounts of pesticides and fertilizers are being used and traded, including export of banned pesticides in the EU to developing countries. We need to support and increase agroecology.
- Disclosure of information about used chemicals along the supply chain is not in place, neither from business to business or for consumers. Information systems and full disclosure of ingredients are key to address pollution and to enable sustainable consumption.

Main expectations from the UN Environment Assembly:

- An overall, legally binding and holistic approach for the regulation of chemicals and policy principles. Following the success of the UN's Global Harmonised System for classification of hazardous chemicals, REACH underlying principles should be applied globally.
- A global framework promoting, supporting and implementing safe substitution, clean production and innovation towards green chemistry and non-chemical solutions.
- Effective phase out and restriction of substances of most concern.
- Strengthen Stockholm, Basel and Rotterdam, Minamata, Montreal, Aarhus Conventions by ensuring proper, ethical and effective enforcement and implementation, further development.

including rapid inclusion of new substances, sufficient financing mechanisms, access for NGOs to the Special Programme, increase public participation.

- Create financial mechanisms (e.g. through taxation) to internalize the costs of pollution from legacy toxic chemicals.
- Create legally binding comprehensive information systems on chemicals in products along the supply chain, including information about health effects, taking into account the full life cycle approach, including full access to information for the public.
- By 2020, establish a living, publicly available global inventory of nanomaterials on the market, including detailed information concerning our region.
- Apply the precautionary principle to new technological developments.
- By 2030, publicly available monitoring shows that no varnishes, lacquers, stains, enamels, glazes, primers or coatings that are being produced, sold, exported, imported or used for any purpose contain lead in the region.
- By 2020, UN Environment assembles a list(s) of endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs) and potential EDCs and sources of exposure relevant for our region from the UNEP/WHO State of the Science report and other sources and makes it publicly available on its website.
- Support information exchange on best regional and national regulatory practices (like REACH) to adopt and enforce chemicals and pesticides regulation.
- Immediately establish and enforce occupational health and safety regulations, especially for the most vulnerable populations, and provide equal protection in the workplace and the community in 150 countries.
- Provide guidance and assistance on agroecology and ecosystem approaches to sustainable food and fibber production to 50 countries by 2025; 150 countries by 2030.
- Phase out the manufacture, import, sale and use of highly hazardous pesticides in 50 countries by 2025; 150 countries by 2030, including export of banned pesticides in the EU to non-EU countries.
- Apply strict regulations and enforcement for pharmaceuticals in the environment and rapidly implement the recommendations on pharmaceuticals in the environment made by SAICM.
- Regulation and enforcement of industrial livestock and fish farming to prevent contamination of the environment by excessive wastes from these operations and phasing out the use of sub-therapeutic antibiotics.
- Fully implement the Aarhus Convention in the region, especially Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs), and urge other regions to develop regional agreements similar to the Aarhus Convention.

Water & Marine

Marine pollution

1. Marine pollution from plastics

Every year, 8 million tons of plastic waste enters the oceans. It there will be more plastic waste than fish in the oceans. After decades of voluntary action, global plastic pollution has not improved. There is now need for urgent, binding extended producer responsibility measures and actions to ensure a full take-back of all plastic produced and used (no incineration, no land filling, no reuse of toxic plastics in products, no oxo-degradable plastics). The successful introduction of bans on single-use plastics bags in many cities and countries around the world, show this measure has been able to reduce up to 80% of plastic bags in several cases, and is a measure that can be implemented without delay.

Therefore, UNEA-3 should call for:

- Immediate action by all member states to ban single use plastics and micro beads, reduce production, use and releases of plastic, plastic products and packaging and increase pricing of plastic packaging, in line with the polluter pays principle. Member states shall report back on progress achieved at the next UN Environment Assembly in 2019.

- Promote safer alternatives to incineration and land filling of marine litter, halting new investment and funding to incinerators; implement zero waste and the polluter pays principle;
- Ensure increased monitoring and reporting of plastic pollution in marine and terrestrial environments and human bodies.
- Establish an ad-hoc open-ended working group that presents its recommendations for a stronger global architecture to combat plastic pollution at the next UNEA in 2019, ensuring the control of plastic pollution at every stage of the plastic life cycle.

2. Marine pollution by ships and oil/gas transportation

The shipping sector is main source of oil pollution and (toxic and hazardous) waste dumping in oceans. We call on UNEA-3 to include in the resolution on reducing marine pollution to:

- Create a public reporting obligation (PRTR protocol) for ships dumping/washing oil and other waste into sea and introduction of penalty system.
- Agree on the need to ban the recycling of end-of-life vessels in the intertidal zone (i.e. beaching method), and to support the development of facilities that can ensure full containment of ship-borne pollutants.
- Ensure the building of toxic-free ships that can be dismantled in line with a cradle-to-cradle approach.
- Creation of a GPS-based APP to monitor ships spilling waste, oil to be developed by UN and partners.
- Agree to phase out of use of heavy oil for ship engines in all areas including the arctic by 2020.
- Agree on a moratorium on building oil and gas pipelines under the sea.

3. Marine pollution from land-based sources

The mining industry worldwide is one of the most toxic polluters of water sources (such as cadmium, chrome, mercury, uranium etc.) often in ecological sensitive areas and indigenous lands. We call on UNEA-3 to include in the resolution on reducing water pollution to:

- Monitor and commit to reducing from all major rivers and waterways for existing and emerging substances of concern, including persistent, bio accumulative and toxic substances (PB); very persistent and very bio accumulative substances(VPVB); chemicals that are carcinogens or mutagens or that adversely affect, inter alia, the reproductive, endocrine, immune or nervous systems; persistent organic pollutants (POPs), mercury and other chemicals of global concern; chemicals produced or used in high volumes; chemicals subject to wide dispersive uses; and other chemicals of concern at the national level as determined in SAICM Overarching Policy Strategy para 9.
- Ensure containment and clean-up of liquid waste / tailing ponds from ongoing as well as legacy (old) industrial and mining activities to be financed by the mining and chemical industry
- Ensure municipal waste management, in particular packaging and hazardous (liquid) waste, including separate collection and treatment in all river basins and coastal areas (because of lack of wastewater treatment this pollutes rivers and oceans, and is one of the main sources of marine litter)
- Support global programme for decentralized wastewater treatment systems (constructed wetlands, ecological sanitation etc.) in all river basins and coastal areas which are often not able to obtain financing from infrastructure funds, despite the fact that they are the least cost-intensive option

Fresh Water Pollution

The industrial agriculture sector is another one of the biggest polluters of fresh and underground water sources, we call on UNEA-3 to include in the resolution on reducing water pollution to:

- Give financial incentives to farmers for the reduction of and phase out of all uses of pesticides and synthetic fertilizer, which will significantly reduce costs of water cleaning to provide drinking water quality (example: city of Munich).
- Give tax incentives (such as reduced VAT) for organic agriculture that does not pollute groundwater with chemicals and nitrates to increase consumer demand.